

EAST PROVIDENCE SCHOOL DEPARTMENT

East Providence School Committee

East Providence City Hall

145 Taunton Avenue

East Providence, Rhode Island 02914

September 25, 2012

Open Session

Mr. Charles Tsonos, Chairman, called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. School Committee members present: Luisa Abatecola, Stephen Furtado, Ryan Tellier, Chrissy Rossi, Charles Tsonos. Also present: Dr. John DeGoes, Interim Superintendent, Robert M. Silva, Esq. and Andrew Thomas, Esq.

The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag & Moment of Silence were observed.

Public Comment I – None

Student/Staff Recognition – None

Student Liaison Report – Joshua Concepcion presented a report on High School events and activities.

Report on City of East Providence Budget Commission - Dr. DeGoes

reported that at the last meeting, Diane Brennan, Chair, explained the process for hiring a permanent Superintendent; the time frame is to seek applications in October, review in November, and to appoint a permanent Superintendent in December. In response to Mr. Furtado's question regarding the Search Committee makeup, Dr. DeGoes answered that it was not discussed .

Public Comment I - None

Interim Superintendent's Report

Presentation of Preliminary School Budget for 2012-2013 -City Manager, Peter Gracykowski, Malcolm Moore, Finance Director and John Cimino, Interim Finance Director, attended to answer questions on the city's budget for FY2013.

Mrs. Rossi asked if the process is set in stone; she was concerned with a \$3million cut, felt it would cause a problem going forward, and had concerns about what would happen if the School Department overspends since this is less than last year's budget.

Mr. Gracykowski stated that hearings on the budget will be held on October 4th and 18th; he explained that because the City took care of the deficit, there are no longer deficit payments; departments were consolidated; numbers are actual vs. budget; we should not repeat the same mistakes; oversight is there now. Mrs. Rossi asked about additional special education expenses. Mr. Gracykowski stated that

he would like the School Committee to participate in the budget process; School Committee will receive documents approximately October 4th and he would like input and comments; there will be time between public hearings to provide comments and have an opportunity to speak. Mr. Tsonos asked about funds for negotiations or pending legal issues. Mr. Moore explained that the attorneys will send a letter listing liabilities and if things come up, he can change going forward.

Mrs. Rossi asked where the figure came from and Mr. Moore advised it came from the 2011-12 budget revised. Mrs. Rossi pointed out that administrative positions have not been filled and that is not a savings because we need those positions. Mr. Moore stated that he tried to make sure vacancies were taken into consideration. Mrs. Rossi questioned legal and what happens if expenses pop next year.

Mr. Moore explained that if money is set aside, that would be surplus; the amount has to be known and trying to budget for it is difficult.

Mrs. Rossi asked about maintenance for schools. Mr. Moore will discuss it with the School Department Controller, Mr. Fratiello, for that budget; schools will receive a budget and will be accountable for it. Mr. Moore spoke to Ms. Gallogly about maintenance of effort and will get an answer on that; the city has to give the same amount as last year by state law. Discussion about all day Kindergarten; this year full day K; money should come to us for it this year. Mr. Furtado asked about budgeting for students coming into the system through Bradley and group homes.

NECAP Test Scores – Science – Dr. DeGoes reported that half the schools scored at or above the state average, which is a testament to the hard work by teachers in the district. Significant gains were made over the previous year at High School; Silver Spring received the best scores in the district. A great deal of work still needs to be done in other schools.

Building Committee/Facilities Report - Ed Catelli reported we are in the final phase contracted with Johnson Controls to provide computer controlled HVAC and to replace the hot water system at Martin Middle School. Ed Catelli reported that the operation of a building management system of all schools is a great situation with Johnson Controls.

Construction at schools – Mr. Gracykowski reported that the \$9 million bond is to close around October 11th which will pay off previous work, pay the bridge loan; the rest of the work; we will need to draw down from RIBEC. Mr. Catelli will make the doors and the PA systems at Martin Middle School and the High School a priority along with work on some elevators. Mr. Catelli congratulated the custodial staff for doing a great job in getting schools opened.

Transportation Report – Dr. DeGoes stated that student enrollment was 5455 as of September 21st with 2105 students eligible for busing; about 400 are not eligible, but there is an appeal process for

bus passes.

Discussion about the number of students who actually ride busses and the fact that appeals still may be granted. Discussion took place regarding safety issues and crossing guards; concern about who will fill the Director of Transportation position. Dr. DeGoes advised that the secretary in that office is trained for most calls; we will still proceed with the bus company until the decision is made regarding a temporary or permanent position.

Mrs. Rossi questioned the procedure for filling the position. Dr. DeGoes stated that the position will be posted after review by H/R Director and Budget Commission.

Personnel Report on Retirements/Resignations/Leaves of Absence:

RESIGNATIONS

Neil Bogosian Special Education Teacher-EPHS-Effective 08/30/2012

Christen Farias ELL Teacher –MMS

Effective 08/30/2012

Brendan Foley 4/5 Visual Impaired Teacher

Effective 09/11/2012

Donna Santoro Supervisory Assistant-SS

Effective 08/28/2012

Nora Chandley Social Studies Department Head-RMS

Effective 2012/2013 School Year

Jonathan Maxwell Network Technician-District-Effective 09/21/2012

Susan Boegler 2/5 Speech Pathologist-Effective 07/2012

Robert Perry RTI Coordinator-EPHS-Effective 09/20/2012

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

**Cornelia McCarthy (1yr) Grade 1 Teacher- Francis-Effective 2012/2013
School Year**

**Stephanie Boocock Reading Specialist-RMS-Effective 2012/2013
School Year**

MILITARY LEAVE

Scott Hunt Effective 09/11/2012-02/15/2013

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes - A motion was made by Mrs. Rossi to approve the minutes of the meetings held on June 12, 2012, July 9, 2012 and July 24, 2012, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 5-0.

Finance Report – Dr. DeGoes noted that expenditures are at 80% and

the department is on target to finish the year with a balanced budget.

Mr. Furtado requested a motion to convene in Executive Session for purposes of discussing: Personnel- R.I. Gen. Laws §42-46-5(a) (1); Collective Bargaining R.I. Gen. Laws §42-46-5(a) (2); Litigation/Pending Litigation -R.I. Gen. Laws §42-46-5(a)(2), motion by Mr. Tellier, seconded by Mrs. Rossi, Vote 5-0.

Open Session reconvened; motion to seal the minutes by Mr. Furtado, seconded by Mr. Tellier. No votes were taken in Executive Session.

Action Items

Personnel Appointments

SUPERINTENDENT'S PERSONNEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

APPOINTMENTS

Edward DeArruda 4/5 Assistant Band Director-EPHS

Effective 10/01/2012

Melanie Murray Head Teacher-Waddington

Effective 2012/2013 School Year

Leila McCarthy Social Studies Department Head-RMS

Effective 2012/2013 School Year

Linda Tarantelli Science Department Head-RMS

Effective 2012/2013 School Year

Sue Mungovan School Nurse-Henn/Mead

Effective 09/18/2012

Jennifer Dunay Physical Ed/Health Teacher-EPHS

Effective 2012/2013 School Year

David Jarvais Technology Education-MMS

Effective 2012/2013 School Year

**Courtney Neves Grade 5 Teacher- Whiteknact -Effective 2012/2013
School Year**

**Laura Messoro Grade 1 Teacher-Waddington -Effective 2012/2013
School Year**

**Christina Mitchell Special Ed/Resource Teacher-Whiteknact -Effective
2012/2013 School Year**

**Jennifer Cooper Reading Specialist-Oldham-Effective 2012/2013
School Year**

**Samantha Goldman Grade 4 Teacher-Oldham -Effective 2012/2013
School Year**

**Patricia McKenney Testing Coordinator-Francis-2012/2013 School
Year**

**Kim Dos Reis Occupational Therapist-MMS
Effective 09/21/2012**

Motion to approve by Mrs. Rossi, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 5-0.

Requisitions – Bill List

Warrant #

1248 8/15/12 \$22,225.00

1249 8/17/12 \$1,968.75

1251 9/5/12 \$1,430,621.01

1252 9/5/12 \$41,126.59

1253 9/5/12 \$1,233,860.51

1254 9/5/12 \$365,199.20

1255 9/5/12 \$2,900.00

1256 9/13/12 \$923,148.00

1257 9/13/12 \$ 56,100.53

**Motion to approve by Mrs. Rossi, seconded by Mrs. Abatecola. Vote
5-0.**

Requests for Home Schooling – Motion to approve by Mrs. Rossi, seconded by Mrs. Abatecola.

Vote 5-0.

Procedures for Access to Public Records – Second Passage – Motion to approve by Mrs. Rossi, seconded by Mr. Tellier. Vote 5-0.

Report of Sub-Committee Re: Budget Commission Proposal for Consolidation of Legal Services – Discussion regarding an opinion from RIDE Assistant Commissioner, David Abbott, that it would not be advisable to consolidate school and city legal counsel. In the RFP from the city, a majority of items out of 23 total items, only two pertain to schools; everything else is the city solicitor. Motion by Mr. Furtado to inform the Budget Commission and to copy Rosemary Booth Gallogly, the Governor, House Chair, that the School Department should retain its rights under RIGL 16-2-9(g) to retain private counsel, seconded by Mrs. Rossi. Vote 5-0.

New Business

Volunteers in Schools - Mr. Furtado said that volunteers should have minimum background checks. Mrs. Rossi felt that with volunteers in schools, we would be background checking every parent. Mr. Furtado advised that the National PTA works through the PTA subject to background checks. Mrs. Rossi stated she cannot support this idea.

Policy on School Functions /Dances - Mr. Furtado advised that this was solved years ago by making all events inclusive; it is a non-issue here because of that.

Budget - Mrs. Rossi wished to comment further on the budget; she was not comfortable with the way it was presented, since there was not enough thought given to the process and not enough consideration of schools; she believes that the budget is short about \$3 million and that will backfire. The School Committee does not know what was cut; there were a lot of one-time items in the last budget and we will probably have a problem in the end.

PTA Updates - Mrs. Rossi noted a great resurgence of PTA; Orlo, Waddington have come to the table and we have had volunteers doing their share. She was impressed by the support and there is talk of city wide PTA to discuss best practices; she would like PTA representatives to come to meetings to express their ideas and advise all about upcoming events; School Committee can volunteer and hopefully there will be more of the same activities similar to the last two years; she would like to have an open forum for PTA on the agenda under New Business.

Building Use Policy - Mrs. Rossi –Discussion regarding problems with applications approved for reserving buildings on certain days, checks received, and then person told they cannot have the days they

reserved. The policy/procedures need to be corrected to prevent this from happening.

Transportation (Mrs. Rossi) - None

Special Education - Mrs. Rossi has received complaints that students are not getting what they need; she asked Superintendent DeGoes to assist in getting this in line.

Bonds – October 11(Mrs. Rossi) – No Report

Hiring Process - Mrs. Rossi asked if there is a policy on hiring now with the Budget Commission.

Discussion: Mr. Tellier advised there is a policy for hiring Principals and positions above that. Mrs. Rossi asked to review the process and procedure with the Budget Commission to get help we need without red tape. Dr. DeGoes advised that the extraordinary situation the city is in gives great authority to the Budget Commission which was previously held by the City Council and School Committee; this is a new experience for him and a unique predicament.

Discussion about the process. Dr. DeGoes advised that if a new position or a vacancy exists, it is sent to the Budget Commission to get permission for permanent person to fill it, and then it is processed through Human Resources for posting, interviewing and Superintendent's recommendation to the School Committee.

Mrs. Rossi requested that the H/R Director write up the policy/procedure for the policy book.

Public Comment II

Judy Lopes, President of Whiteknact PTA commented that volunteers may be unemployed and have the time but not the money for background checks; she asked to find a way for parents and others who cannot afford it; possibly through police department involvement.

BJ DeCresenzo, Island Ave – Spoke about the Budget Commission hiring and firing ; asked for further clarification; some misunderstanding with the Budget Commission that the Superintendent should make the recommendations.

Dr. DeGoes explained that if the School Committee meeting had been held on the normal date, this would not have happened. Because the School Committee changed the date of its meeting, it went to the Budget Commission first and the Budget Commission makes the choice anyway; if a position is vacant or new it has to go to the Budget Commission to get approval first to be posted or advertised. After the pool of applicants is completed, interviews are held, a recommendation is made to the Superintendent, and it then goes back to the Budget Commission. Dr. DeGoes explained that the Budget Commission meets twice a month and the School Committee only meets once, so it probably was just the way the dates fell.

Izilda Teves – Orlo Ave. playground committee; 100 volunteers installed playground; painted the gym and fence; will complete by end of October, open to community; thanks to all who supported the project; especially Tony Ferreira and Fred Rybka.

Anthony Ferreira, 44 Brightridge Ave, had pictures of the gym at Orlo Ave School showing areas which needed cleaning. He felt that background checks will stop people from volunteering; why all of a sudden do volunteers need a background check; Home Depot sent 25 volunteers to work on a project in East Providence; volunteers getting background checks is not going to happen.

Mr. Rybka asked how can we clean up and improve our facilities; mentioned the dirty pipes above cafeteria/gym at Orlo Ave School.

Dr. DeGoes advised that the money was not in the budget to get a lift to be able to reach that area in the school; conditions of all buildings needs to be looked at; outside of normal maintenance; bond does not reach all the problems; people come before the School Committee and City Council with a problem and ask how to correct it. Thanks to Ed Catelli for his assistance.

Announcements - None

A motion was made by Mr. Furtado to adjourn, seconded by Mr.

Tellier. Vote 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia A. Iannelli, Administrative Assistant

Stephen Furtado, Clerk of the Committee